

## Meeting of the Advisers for European PES Affairs (AFEPA's)

14-15 March 2019, Brussels

### *Outcomes*

**Participants:** AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IS, LT, LU, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, COM, PES SECRETARIAT

Partially: PES Network Chair, EMPL B.1, EMPL D.1, EMPL E.2, external contractors

**Absent:** LV, UK

#### **DAY 1**

##### **ITEM 1: Opening of the meeting, adoption of the agenda**

The draft agenda was adopted. The outcomes of the 2018 October AFEPA meeting were endorsed without changes. They will be uploaded at the EMPL PES Network website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1100&#navItem-relatedDocuments>

##### **ITEM 2: Follow up 9<sup>th</sup> PES Board meeting Austria**

The Chair summarised the December 2018 Board meeting in Vienna:

He gave feedback from the Leadership dinner, highlighting core values discussed by Board Members and the input by Ali Malodhji as an example of vivid job matching: <https://www.whatchado.com/en/>. The core topic of last Board Meeting “shortage of skilled labour” remains important and will be followed up. Various strategy papers have been approved.

Fons Leroy reported back from recent events, such as the informal EMCO meeting. EMCO showed interest in the Benchlearning activities, in the collaboration of the Network with the Western Balkan countries and WAPES. The dialogue with EMCO is an opportunity of the PES Network to contribute to long-term strategy of the EU. In April 2019, Fons Leroy will represent the Network at the High Level Conference on the Future of Work in Brussels, at an ESF+ conference in Bucharest and at an Eurodiaconia round table discussion.

### **ITEM 3: 11<sup>th</sup> PES Board meeting, 6-7 June, Bucharest**

RO informed the Network about the next Board meeting. Items on the agenda will be the election of the new Chair, Benchlearning, the Work Programme 2019 and a presentation on the labour market in Romania. The main topics for discussion at the Board itself will be shortages of labour skills in the EU and how to meet ageing of the labour force. AFEPA's discussed about angles of most interest under these topics. With regards to skills shortages a focus could be set on employing people with lower skills, up- and reskilling employees and jobseekers and mobilising inactive people. On the support to an ageing workforce it could be e.g. the attitude of employers, support of small and medium employers in organisational development, access and possibilities for training and coaching. Good PES practices demonstrating strategies and initiatives to prevent early exit from the labour market, and to support longer working lives will be requested. Possible topics for the leadership dinner for Heads of PES on Wednesday 5 June were discussed and will be shared with the Board Members. A site visit of a social assistance centre is supposed to take place in the afternoon of Day 2.

### **ITEM 4: Index on quality of ALMP provision. Presentation of the final report and proposal for further steps**

Agóta Scharle (Budapest Institute) presented the new Index on quality of ALMP provision. The new index is composed of 5 sub-indices, compared to 6 in the previous version. Profiling and referral are kept more or less unchanged. Follow-up and outsourcing are merged into delivery. Budget and Performance management are included as new sub-indices. The new indicators make use of Benchlearning enablers. Some of these cover broader aspects, not only ALMP, but it is assumed that the correlation is strong.

NL and DK stressed that municipalities in their countries have a main responsibility for supplying ALMPs, and that this must be reflected in the index. MT and SI were stressing a harmonisation with EMCO data collection and an alignment to the revision of the Benchlearning excellence model. SE will deliver comments in written.

Follow up: The Reference Group will discuss the remaining issues related to methods and data, including finding solutions how to reflect the organisation of ALMP supply in NL and DK. The Index will be recalculated, based on the existing Benchlearning and questionnaire data, and presented to the Board in June. The PES will be asked to give permission to use of the enablers scores for the purpose of recalculation. The task will be co-ordinated with the EMCO data collection. A full recalculation will take place after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Benchlearning cycle.

### **ITEM 5: Work Programme and new contract 2019**

The PES Secretariat presented the current state of the 2019 Work Programme and ongoing activities embedded in three thematic clusters of Future of Work and Digitalisation, PES Service Delivery and PES Performance Management. Information on a new Mutual Assistance Project in Czech Republic was given.

The PES Secretariat announced the coming data-collection for the benchmarking exercise. A letter from the Chair beginning of April with a supporting document on the definitions of the

indicators will highlight the importance to improve the data quality. First of all there is a need to have separate data on jobseekers involved in ALMPS and those not involved.

The PES Secretariat also called for new assessors and announced the training and the joint assessors' workshop on 26-27 September.

#### **ITEM 6: Benchlearning 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle - Adjustment of the excellence model**

The roadmap for revising the Benchlearning's excellence model was presented. Due to a questionnaire on the relevance of the revision of sections, there is an overall agreement on the core sections to remain. The following four sections show a relatively huge need for revision.

- C: Sustainable activation and management of transitions
- E: evidence based design and implementation of services
- F: Management of partnerships and stakeholders
- G: Allocation of PES Resources

For each of these section a newly established task force consisting of volunteering PES representatives should work on revising the model, supported by the contractor. The contractor will take over the literature research which supports a revision of the enablers and coordinate the work of the task force. The new model will have to be adopted at the PES Board in December 2019.

As some revisions have been suggested which do not refer to one single section but the overall approach, especially addressing the discrepancy between centrally defined procedure and practice on local level, there will be a fifth task force. NL and SI expressed their interest in participating in this task force.

Five PES however do not see a need for the revision of the excellence model. This has to be considered.

Follow up: The PES Secretariat will ask for participants for all five virtual task forces (on C, E, F, G and the overarching one) for refining the excellence model for a period from April to June 2019 and discuss this issue further on during the Benchlearning Working Group in November.

#### **ITEM 7: BL dashboard**

The revamped version of the Dashboard, which will be active from end March, was presented. Changes concern visual aspects, the structure of the content and the learning network. Additional resources will be provided such as the AFEPAs contact list and feedback reports of the Learning Dialogues. Afepas gave overall positive feedback. NL mentioned that they have received positive feedbacks when showing the Dashboard to the ministry, and proposed to involve stakeholders. SI will send written comments by e-mail. Note that the dashboard is meant so far to be used internally.

#### **ITEM 8: Pilot thematic learning dialogue (VDAB) - Lessons learnt**

The PES Secretariat presented the results of the satisfaction questionnaire on the pilot Learning Dialogue hosted by VDAB. Overall the questionnaire results have been positive with room for

improvement. The input by the host PES was highly appreciated. Critical feedback was given during the Afepas meeting from participating PES and others. Main items to be adapted in the current concept are:

- Clarifying the expectations and concrete learning needs earlier and in more detail
- Earlier start of kick-off and preparation phase
- Better balancing discussions on how to implement change (project management) and sharing knowledge on the learning issue
- More flexibility in terms of expectations, further activities and follow-up according to the needs (including the possibility of insight into practice on local level)

Further comments emphasized the time constraints; a proper preparation also in terms of the status-quo and clear objectives by PES on their learning topic would allow to use the 1.5 days of the Learning Dialogue to further develop the content and next steps to take during the Learning Dialogue.

Follow up: The contractor will revise the concept and the standard agenda taking into account the feedback given. All PES are asked to send the contact details of participants for all upcoming learning dialogues.

#### **ITEM 9: Future of Benchlearning – informal board meeting 13 May in Spain**

The PES Secretariat informed on the agenda for the informal Heads of PES meeting on further developing Benchlearning. During this meeting Heads of PES will discuss on the current state of play and set priorities and guidelines for the future (including the Learning Dialogues, the 3rd cycle assessments and beyond). Testimonies by Heads of PES on how they make use of the Benchlearning outputs in their PES are welcome.

### **Day 2**

#### **ITEM 10: Evaluation of the Decision and Staff Working Document**

COM recalled the process: the evaluation of the Decision has been launched in 2018 to assess its performance and to feed reflections over the possible future cooperation between European PES post-2020.

An external study was commissioned to Ecorys to support the evaluation work of the Commission. A broad range of stakeholders representing Member State PES, the Commission, Labour Ministries and ESF managing authorities, international organisations, as well as a public consultation have contributed to this study.

An evaluation Staff Working Document will summarise and present the final results of the evaluation process. It will draw on work conducted by COM and contractors. The Staff Working Document and the external study from Ecorys will be made public at a later stage.

#### Follow up:

The precise timeline for the publication of the Staff Working Document and the external study will be communicated to the Afepas as soon as it is confirmed.

### **ITEM 11: Preparation of the PES Network stakeholder conference on prevention, Brussels (15 October 2019)**

COM presented the main outline of the conference. Marianne Thyssen will attend. The detailed programme is under preparation. Afepas were invited to propose themes for the programme. Among the proposals were: i) communication about prevention to employers as well as unemployed, including needs in the future ii) other important reasons for prevention *apart* from technological changes and ICT, iii) mapping of responsibilities – for example what are responsibilities for companies, PES, other partners and stakeholders including education sector and private sector, iv) examples of effective practices and preventive measures and programs ( IE – prepare young people for the LM, HU - career guidance, HR – early intervention, IS - programs of young people, LUX - pilot projects, EL – Skills planning, upskilling services, IT – IT tools), v) persons in risk of unemployment, vi) involvement of big companies.

Follow up: The proposals will be used as input in the planning of the program for the conference.

### **ITEM 12: Europass e-portal**

COM presented the current state of play on the Europass e-portal, including the timeline for the project. Several Afepas asked about the link between the new Europass portal and the EURES portal, and that it is important to avoid overlap. COM responded that while EURES is focused on co-operation, Europass is focused on the individual. There could be important synergies. PES is expected to be a key stakeholder regarding candidates documenting their skills and qualifications, up-skilling and re-skilling, and guidance validation of non-formal and informal learning. COM recognised the PES need of involvement in design and testing, and asked for volunteers to participate in a Focus Group.

AT, BE-VDAB, BG, DE, ES, HU already expressed their interest to attend the focus group.

Follow up: AFEPA's will be contacted to further raise their interest to participate in the Focus group that would take place in June.

### **ITEM 13: Youth Guarantee and Long Term Unemployment data collection**

COM presented main findings in recent studies on the Youth Guarantee and the last data collection. The recommendations on the review of implementation of the Youth Guarantee were highlighted: 1) Creation of a national Youth Guarantee coordination committee; 2) more flexibility regarding the provision of offers; 3) holistic service provision for young people; 4) pro-active outreach; 5) early career-guidance; 6) additional/refined indicators and better tracking systems. Important challenges to tackle are lack of basic skills, work-related practical skills and skills mismatch, as well as labour market intermediation. In addition, ongoing technological developments such as automation of production and services and digitalisation are likely to re-shape the world of work. EL mentioned that their activities (JIA) are not well reflected in the overview. NL mentioned data uncertainty.

#### **ITEM 14: Labour and skills shortages surveys 2019**

COM presented the outline of the data collection on skills shortages and surpluses. This data collection is from 2019 the responsibility of the EURES unit in COM, in co-operation with the national contact points of EURES. Questions raised by some Afepas about national results should therefore be further clarified and discussed with the national contact point. This years' report is expected to be published in July.

BE-Le Forem presented the PES questionnaire on skills shortages and the working group decided at the Board meeting in Vienna. Afepas were asked to present their interest for participating in the Working Group.

Follow up: COM will take contact with PES that have expressed their interest for participation for confirmation.

#### **ITEM 15: Sustainable employment indicator**

The PES Secretariat and ES (chairing the Reference Group on developing a sustainability indicator) informed about the current state of play and presented initial agreements from the reference group and asked for feedback for the way ahead. Afepas pointed out that clarification would be needed, including a definition of sustainability in the literature. The question on the way ahead was postponed.

Follow-up: The PES Secretariat will discuss this issue with the Benchlearning Working Group on 27 March and come back to questions raised by Afepas.

#### **AOB**

- FR summarised the forthcoming WAPES activities: The Executive Committee has a meeting in Geneva week 12. The President of WAPES, Mr Abdelmounaïm Madani, will be present. The simplified BL concept with less enablers is being implemented. 2 European PES will be invited to attend. The WAPES executive secretariat is recruiting someone to follow this activity. The Network of communication correspondents will meet in Paris mid-May. A regional meeting for WAPES Europe will be hosted by Sweden on 12 June. The PES reform in Sweden will be on the agenda. A workshop on PES main challenges will be hosted by Turkey in September. Sweden and Norway will host a workshop on knowledge management in December.
- The PES Capacity data collection will be launched in second week of April. The collection will include the annual part 1 and the biannual part 2.
- Some information from PES are requested to the EMCO benchmarking exercise (identification of adequate policy levers). A short questionnaire on 3 topics will be launched end of March.

End of minutes